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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 THE HAGUE 002388

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SUBJECT: NETHERLANDS/EU: PETER CHASE VISIT HIGHLIGHTS US-EU
ISSUES

Classified By: DCM Daniel Russel for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

11. (C) Summary: At meetings with the MFA on September 10, Peter Chase (EUR/ERA Director) heard that EU Member States see new informal interest groups forming around particular issues. This variable geometry extends to EU representation at the UN, where the EU's formal division of competencies continues to confuse outsiders. The Dutch believe Turkey is on course to get a "yes" to opening negotiations in December. Coordinating the information flow on counter-terrorism discussions at the Senior Level Group remains a challenge. The Dutch are committed to the Stakeholders Dialogue process and Innovation Conference but cannot speak for future EU presidencies. We reiterated our request that the Dutch encourage Member States to conclude the bilateral protocols for the US-EU Mutual Legal Assistance Extradition Agreements by the end of the year. End Summary.

12. (U) Jaap Werner, Director of Political Affairs at the Dutch MFA, Marion Kappeijne, Director of the North American Affairs, and Jos Schellaars, Kappeyne's deputy, met visiting EUR/ERA Director Peter Chase, DCM, and Poloff over lunch on September 10 to review a range of issues, including EU dynamics, the EU at the UN, Turkey (reported septel), the workings of the Senior Level Group, and the Stakeholders Dialogue. Chase separately met with Marjorie Bonn of the Department of Justice at a reception hosted by the DCM.

EU Dynamics at 25

13. (C) Werner said the EU at 25 is finding that a more assertive Solana, anticipating his EU Foreign Minister role, is already starting to provide more centralized guidance in the common security and foreign policy arena. Solana sees his office as taking the lead on the Middle East, Balkans, and ESDP dossiers, and he apparently also wants to stretch out into Africa, as evidenced by the recent mission he sent to Sudan and his growing general interest in African issues.

14. (C) Werner noted the effect of the new EU 10 in CSFP and how new ad hoc groups are forming around certain dossiers, even if they do not make up majorities or blocking minorities. The EU 10 have little or no relationship or interest in Africa, which they leave to the "natural coalition" of Belgium, France, the UK, Germany and the Netherlands. On the other hand, the EU 10 often coalesce around issues related to Russia, Belarus, Ukraine, Moldova and the Caucasus. For example, Latvia put Belarus on the GAERC agenda, he noted. On human rights, the Nordics remain like-minded, while the southern EU members tend to place human rights a little lower on the agenda. The Benelux per se will not be strong, Werner predicted. Finally, the "big three" (UK, France, Germany) still work closely together, sometimes to the point of pushing "pragmatic" Netherlands into the camp of Italy and Spain, Werner concluded.

Turkey and the SLG

15. (C) On Turkey, Werner told Chase and the DCM that the "trend is positive toward a yes." The EU will still temporize, he added, noting that the start of negotiations will wait until the EU and Turkey work out in what kind of format they will address the raft of issues before them, a process that could take months in itself.

16. (C) Regarding the Senior Level Group (SLG), Marion Kappeyne, director of the MFA office of North American Affairs, suggested to the DCM and Chase that we could best use the SLG for keeping in touch on leading issues, such as BMENA. Werner suggested that action on BMENA would have to await results from the US-EU troika meeting in New York. Generally, the DCM suggested that the SLG should formulate follow-through plans for the most recent Summit Declaration. Chase suggested that smaller meetings of principals, such as the upcoming lunch between Undersecretary Larson and his Dutch counterpart Frank Majoor, should have limited, focused agendas, in this case, the Middle East, counter terrorism, and economic issues.

Counter-Terrorism

17. (C) On counter-terrorism, the DCM recalled USG interest in cross-pillarization and noted that the SLG has spun off a sub-group on Border Security (the "Political Dialogue on Border and Transportation Security"). Both Chase and the DCM pointed to the need to look at the architecture for these discussions, particularly at the sub-cabinet level. The DCM noted that we need to "make sense of the feeder process for information to the SLG, Summits, and other meetings on CT." Werner said that the EU, in COTER, has put together a list of priority countries to whom they have offered technical assistance in combating terrorism. A team already visited Morocco and Saudi Arabia, and Algeria is next, he said.

EU in the UN

18. (C) The DCM asked how the US and EU can be effective and not appear at cross purposes in the UN. Specifically, we have trouble with UNGA resolutions on the Middle East whose sole purpose seems to be to generate another USG veto. This creates an atmosphere where it is impossible to handle some UN issues. He reminded the Dutch that every EU vote "has a long tail" in the UNGA. Werner recalled the recent UNGA resolution on the Israeli security fence and said that part of the deal was supposed to be consolidation of UNGA Middle East resolutions.

19. (C) With regard to dealing the EU at the UN, Werner pointed out that shifting competencies on particular subjects made it seem necessary for EU outsiders to deal with both the Commission and the Presidency separately. Mr. Chase countered that the issue of who speaks, Commission or Presidency, is frequently mixed up in New York, even in the EU, and needs clarity for the EU's partners such as the USG. Werner dryly observed that in a matter of years, he expects the issue will be resolved as the EU works toward a unified external representation.

Stakeholder Dialogue

10. (C) Chase recalled to Kappeyne that the USG sees the Stakeholder Dialogue and the Innovation Conference as positive developments enhancing the U.S.-EU

relationship. How to maintain this momentum after the Dutch Presidency, however, remains a concern. Kappeyne assured Chase and the DCM that "the Netherlands is on board for the program," but could not make promises for future EU presidencies.

MLATS

11. (C) Chase spoke to Ministry of Justice's Marjorie Bonn at a reception hosted by the DCM the evening of September 10. Chase stressed Washington's desire for the Dutch to take an active role as EU president to urge Member States to conclude the bilateral protocols for the US-EU Mutual Legal Assistance Extradition Agreements by the end of the year. (Note: Amb. Sobel had made the same point to Justice Minister Donner in a separate September 10 meeting. Donner and DG Visser said they plan to include a call for the Member States to work quickly to conclude the bilateral protocols in the Minister's opening remarks at the Informal JHA Council. End Note.)

12. (U) Mr. Chase cleared this message.
SOBEL